



City of Santa Barbara
Parks and Recreation Department

Memorandum

DATE: March 11, 2010

TO: City Council
Park and Recreation Commission
Airport Commission

FROM: City IPM Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: IPM Advisory Committee Review of IPM Program in 2009 and 2009 Annual Report

In its sixth year of implementation, the City of Santa Barbara's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program continues to grow and evolve. The Committee feels strongly that the program has been successful in its first six years and stands as one of the greatest environmental achievements in the City's history.

The Committee agrees with the analysis presented in the 2009 annual report and supports the direction and programs described therein. It is important to note that, although pesticide use levels vary from year to year based on a number of factors, the committee has confidence in the city staff which continues to exemplify goodwill and integrity in regards to implementing the program, developing new ideas and initiatives and working collaboratively with the committee and the community. We commend them for their dedication across all departments.

A number of additional points in regards to the IPM program are listed below.

- A number of successes have been achieved and demonstration through such practices as rodent trapping, heat treatment of termites, green mosquito control and green control of plant pests. Many green practices are only successful with the benefits of detail oriented, concentrated efforts, which have been exemplified by many efforts in the IPM program.
- Mosquito control necessitates a substantial amount of material use, close to 52% of all units applied in 2009. This is an area where public health is of great concern; therefore effectiveness is the highest priority.
- Challenges at the Airport, including larger buildings that require more toxic treatments for termites and FAA requirements related to rodents near the airfield, also account for a large percentage of city pesticide use.

With budgetary challenges, pressure will increase in 2010 on staff and the committee to accept a decrease in maintenance service levels at many parks (reduction in aesthetic quality) and/or utilize more pesticides. The budgetary challenges have already been realized by loss of park staff dedicated primarily to weed abatement. This means more weeds that are aesthetically displeasing to a portion of the public.

With the associated need for labor related to least toxic methods, we continue to believe that developing a well coordinated, volunteer program will help the long term effectiveness of the IPM program. Expanding the Rose Garden volunteer system, for example, and ensuring volunteers can sign up easily (via email online) should be part of a program that, with some investment by the City, might actually result in reduced labor hours with the benefit of increased outreach to the community.

The Advisory Committee will continue to work with staff, elected officials, and members of the public to ensure a quality program that protects the City's assets while not compromising human and environmental health.